

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 7, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House of Representatives  
H-232, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Doc Hastings  
Chairman  
House Natural Resources Committee  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Chairman Hastings:

Recently the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling released its final report. Seven bipartisan commissioners unanimously issued a clear-eyed verdict on the BP Gulf oil disaster: not only was this tragedy avoidable, it will happen again unless industry, the Administration and Congress take urgent action. Under the leadership of President Obama and Secretary Salazar, the Administration has begun to implement many necessary reforms; however the Congress must act also in order to implement the Commission's important recommendations.

Americans across the country, especially in our coastal states, have not forgotten the impact of this disaster. As we begin the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, we ask you to prioritize taking action on the Commission's recommendations by developing and passing bipartisan legislation that will prevent future oil spills and protect the safety of rig workers, coastal communities, and taxpayers.

The full damage of the BP Deepwater Horizon spill is not yet known. What is known is "systemic failure" on the part of industry and regulators led to the spill. Without Congressional action to permanently reorganize the regulatory system and set strong safety and environmental standards, we will see more damage to jobs, public safety, and the environment.

The Commission's Report states that without Congressional action, we cannot ensure that the Department of Interior will have the tools necessary to protect America's coastal communities' economic and environmental interests, or guarantee the safety of our nation's oil and gas rigs for workers. We are exceedingly concerned that our existing regulatory system is inefficient, plagued with loop-holes for big oil companies, and all too often lets polluters off the hook while exposing taxpayers to economic harm.

As you know, the House of Representatives worked diligently in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress to pass meaningful legislation that would hold responsible parties accountable for the worst environmental catastrophe in our nation's history. Last year, after 26 hearings and with bipartisan support, the House passed the Consolidated Lands, Energy, and Aquatic Act (CLEAR) of 2009, to put an end to the "too-cozy" relationship between industry and government regulators and to put polluters, not taxpayers, on the hook for spill damages.

However, at the time, several Republican colleagues believed it was prudent to wait for the Commission's Report prior to taking Congressional action. Now, swift action is even more necessary to address the Commission's recommendations, and we should pass legislation like the CLEAR Act to protect our communities and ecosystems from such disasters and to hold responsible companies, not the taxpayers and victims, accountable for the economic and environmental damages, should one occur.

We respectfully request that you prioritize bipartisan Congressional action on the Commission's Recommendations without further delay. Such leadership will ensure that the federal government is accountable to the public and prevent this type of event from occurring again in the future.

Sincerely,

The Members of the Sustainable Energy & Environment Coalition (SEEC)



Jay Inslee, Member of Congress  
SEEC Co-Chair



Steve Israel, Member of Congress  
SEEC Co-Chair



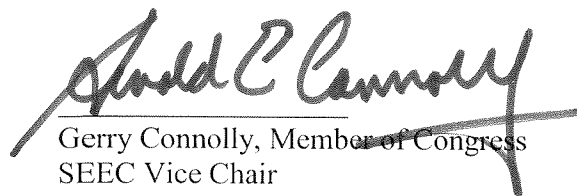
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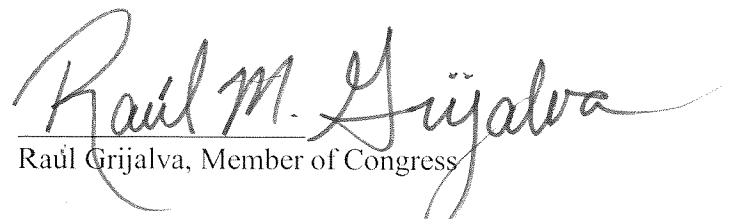


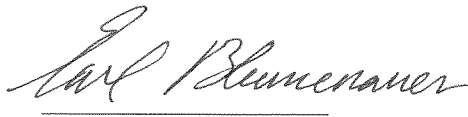
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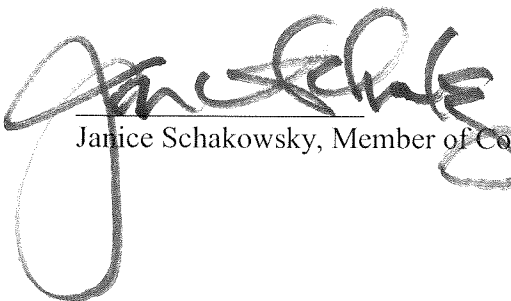
  
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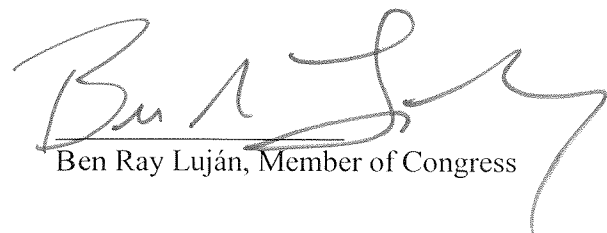
  
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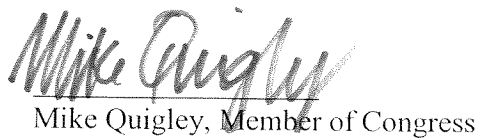
  
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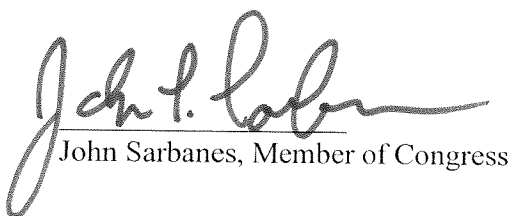
  
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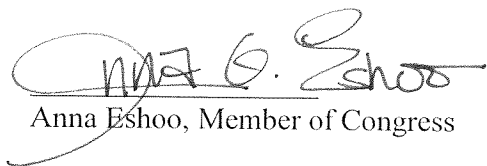
  
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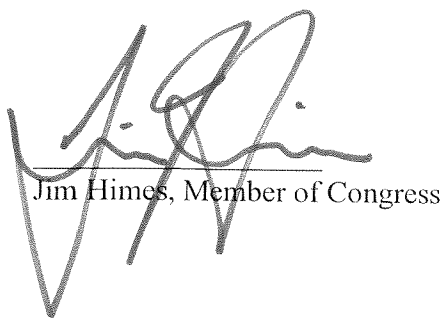
  
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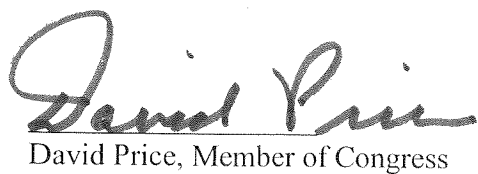
  
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Donna Christensen, Member of Congress

  
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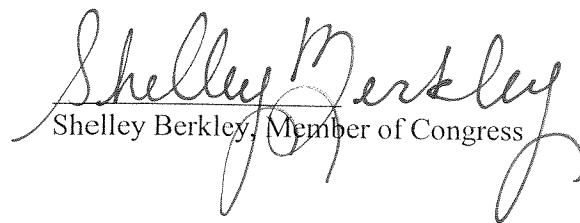
  
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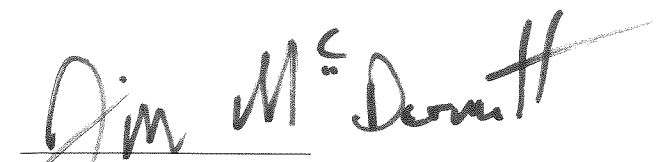
  
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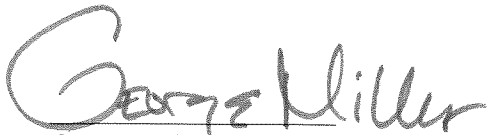
  
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Mike Honda, Member of Congress

  
Shelley Berkley, Member of Congress

  
John Olver, Member of Congress

  
Jim McDermott, Member of Congress



George Miller, Member of Congress



Ed Perlmutter, Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable John Mica, Chairman, House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee  
The Honorable Fred Upton, Chairman, House Energy & Commerce Committee  
The Honorable Lamar Smith, Chairman, House Judiciary Committee